



Oberlin Heritage Center E-Gazette.

September 2014

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OHC has 700 Facebook Likes!

Hip, hip, hooray and huzzah! We're thrilled to hit the 700 mark on our Facebook page as summer comes to an end. If you are not yet a Heritage Center follower on Facebook, please search and "Like" us! Lots of great photos, fun facts, history trivia, and more that you won't find anywhere else! A great way to stay in touch with all that is happening at OHC!

I Spy, You Spy, We All Spy Something FUN!

If you haven't yet had a chance to take part in the delightfully engaging **I Spy Oberlin: History & Architecture Scavenger Hunt**, you still have one final opportunity this season. The "hunt" takes place **Saturday, September 6 at 3 p.m.** It's a one-hour walk, departing from the Monroe House (73½ South Professor Street), designed especially for children ages 5-11 with an adult companion. Families enjoy being guided through historic Oberlin keeping their eyes peeled for historic markers, decorative details, and Oberlin oddities. (The event takes place rain or shine; we "spy" inside the Heritage Center's historic building in inclement weather.) Just \$3 per child (and accompanying adults are free); reservations are encouraged. For information, visit www.oberlinheritagecenter.org or call (440) 774-1700.

Fall History Walks Combine Powerful Stories with Serene Setting

Enjoy stories of some of Oberlin's most intriguing residents of days gone by, amidst the autumn beauty of Westwood Cemetery, on the **Radicals and Reformers History Walk** offered **Saturdays, September 6, 13, 20 and 27 at 11:00 a.m.** The guided 75-minute tour promises a pleasing balance of Westwood's scenic landmarks and stories of some of the many spirited men and women of Oberlin who simply refused the status quo. \$6 per adult; free to OHC members, college students, and children under 18 accompanied by an adult. (The walks are recommended for ages 9 and up.) Participants gather near the Westwood Cemetery entrance (455 Morgan Street) to begin the historic journey; parking is available nearby. Advance registration necessary; visit www.oberlinheritagecenter.org or call (440) 774-1700.

Docents Needed: Storytellers Who Make A Difference

The stories can be eventful and inspiring, perhaps amusing, even peculiar – yet time and again tour feedback confirms that it's the *storyteller* who makes Heritage Center tours so memorable and who kindles an interest in our visitors for learning more! The key ingredient for a successful tour is a docent who loves what he or she is doing. OHC volunteer docents are given thorough training, plenty of staff and peer support, flexible scheduling, and continued education and learning opportunities. If you have considered being a docent at the Oberlin Heritage Center, our next **docent training workshop** will be **Saturday, September 13 from 2-5 p.m.** at the Monroe House (73½ South professor Street, in the back of the Conservatory of Music parking lot). This session is for the "*Upstairs/Downstairs Tour – Small Town, Big Stories*," which acquaints visitors with Oberlin's founding in 1833 and the events, themes and people who shaped the community during its first one hundred years. Participants should experience a guided tour at the Heritage Center prior to the workshop. Contact Museum Education and Tour Coordinator **Elizabeth Schultz** to make arrangements for a complimentary tour ticket. The

workshop is free and open to the public. Docents are asked to commit to help with at least four OHC tours or open house events during the coming year. Register at www.oberlinheritagecenter.org or call (440) 774-1700 to reserve your place.

OHC Celebrates Smithsonian Museum Day with FREE Tours

The Oberlin Heritage Center takes part in *Smithsonian Magazine's* 10th Annual Museum Day by providing free tour admission on **Saturday, September 27 at 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.** to visitors plus one guest who present the Museum Day Admission Card. Museum Day involves hundreds of museums around the country and allows for one day only the free-admission policy of the Smithsonian's Washington, D.C.-based properties to be emulated throughout America. Don't miss this great opportunity to take a tour of the Oberlin Heritage Center or to visit another participating museum that day. Find out which museums nationwide are part of Museum Day and download your Admission Card at www.Smithsonianmagazine.com/museumday.

Exploring Oberlin's Central Role in Ending Slavery

J. Brent Morris, assistant professor of history at the University of South Carolina Beaufort and a recognized scholar on the history of slavery and the antislavery movement in America, presents **Be not conformed to this world: Oberlin and the Antebellum Fight for Freedom and Equality** on **Monday, September 29 at 4:30 p.m.** at Moffett Auditorium in the Oberlin College Mudd Center Library. Morris is the author of an acclaimed new book, *Oberlin, Hotbed of Abolitionism*, which establishes Oberlin (college and community) at the core of the antislavery movement in the West and as one of the most influential groups of reformers in antebellum America. Morris' presentation will be followed by a book signing, with books available for purchase at the event, or in advance at the Oberlin Heritage Center's Museum Store or online at www.oberlinheritagecenter.org. (Books purchased through the Museum Store will receive a 15% discount; OHC members receive another 10% off as a benefit of membership – This special offer will be good through the September 29 event.) The program is co-sponsored with the Friends of the Oberlin College Library, Oberlin College Archives, the Oberlin College History Department, and the Oberlin African-American Genealogy and History Group, and it is free and open to the public. For more information, contact members@oberlinheritage.org.

Save These Dates! (details in future E-Gazettes)

October 15 (Wednesday, 7:15 p.m.) **Eugene D. Schmiel** on *Jacob Cox and the 'Oberlin Letter' - Military Hero and Controversial Politician* - Kendal/Heiser Auditorium. Free/Open to the public.

October 16 (Thursday, Noon) **Eugene D. Schmiel** on *Jacob Cox: Oberlin's Finest Civil War General* - Oberlin Public Library Community Room. Brown bag lunch presentation and book signing. Free.

October 17 (Friday, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.) **Community Arts & Culture Day** – No School/Kids' Fun! – various venues. Co-hosted by the Oberlin Heritage Center, FAVA, the Allen Memorial Art Museum and the Oberlin Public Library/America Reads.

November 9 (Sunday, 3-4:30 p.m.) *Oberlin Connections through Hymns* and the *Celebration of a Historical Marker for Antoinette Brown Blackwell and First Church* – The First Church in Oberlin, U.C.C. Free/Open to the public.

November 20 (Thursday, 7:15 p.m.) **Eugenia Poporad Vanek** on *20th Century Stories from Around Town* - Kendal/Heiser Auditorium. Free/Open to the public.

November 25 (Tuesday, 7:15 p.m.) **Oberlin Heritage Center college student interns** present **Sharing Stories from Overseas** - Kendal/Heiser Auditorium. Free/Open to the public.

December 6 and 13 (Saturdays, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.) **Kids Winter Fun Days** - Crafts, Games, Music and more for children 5 to 12. Fee charged. Sign up on the Events Calendar tab at www.oberlinheritagecenter.org.

December 9 (Tuesday, 2:30 p.m.) **Patricia Murphy** on *Cass Gilbert in Context* – Tea Talk at Allen Memorial Art Museum. More info at http://oberlin.edu/amam/tuesday_tea.html.

December 17 (Wednesday, 7:15 p.m.) **Liz Schultz** on *What's New In History Museums and Historic Sites Leadership* - Kendal/Heiser Auditorium. Free/Open to the public.

Recommended Reading from the Heritage Center

As the leaves begin to turn, and students are back-to-school, here are a few good reads to add to your own Oberlin History Reading List. All are available at the Oberlin Heritage Center's Museum Store or online at www.oberlinheritagecenter.org.

Bonnets to Boardrooms: Women's Stories from a Historic College Town (Eugenia Poporad Vanek) – now available at www.Amazon.com. A wonderful book – and a great gift for a friend, too! Amazon customer reviews consistently have given the book a 5-star rating with comments such as: “*These beautifully written and organized time capsules offer great insight into the lives of some remarkable women. The small town setting reflecting universal themes reminds [me] of some of Sinclair Lewis’ writing.*” And more reviewer praise: “*These recollections from 52 women bring the history of the early twentieth century to life. Well written, with great photos and heart-warming stories, it’s a joy to read.*”

Oberlin: Hotbed of Abolitionism: College, Community and the Fight for Freedom and Equality in Antebellum America (J. Brent Morris). John Stauffer (Harvard University) calls this “*a superbly conceptualized and deeply researched book that makes an important contribution to abolition studies utopian studies and the studies of antebellum reform. It is the first book to explore in detail Oberlin’s role in ending slavery and obtaining social equality.*” Richard S. Newman (Rochester Institute of Technology, adds: “*Illuminating the national importance of what we often think of as a highly local story, it is an important piece of scholarship and a very enjoyable read.*” Remember there is a 15% discount on this book at the OHC Museum Store now through Brent Morris’ September 29 program in Oberlin (OHC members receive another 10% off as a benefit of membership). Have your book signed by the author at the September 29 presentation at Oberlin College’s Mudd Library (Moffett Auditorium).

Citizen General: Jacob Dolson Cox and the Civil War Era (Eugene D. Schmiel). Cox, an Oberlin College graduate (1851), Union Army general and 28th governor of Ohio – also happened to be married to Charles Grandison Finney’s daughter, Helen. Schmiel’s full-length biography has been “*applauded for...[a] perceptive and authoritative account of an extraordinary American.*” Find out more about Jacob Cox who has been called “*The most intriguing character from the Civil War era that most Americans have never heard of.*” Gene Schmiel will present two programs in Oberlin (including a book signing) in mid-October. Pick up a copy of his new book now and learn more about this local hero who was “*not just a significant figure in the Civil War and the writing of its history, but an important player in postwar politics as well.*” .

What’s the Buzz?

Just had to share this day-brightening note sent by Oberlin College student volunteer **Madison Bishop** (’15) to Museum Education/Tour Coordinator **Liz Schultz** after completing her summer work at the

Heritage Center: *Thank you for being such a great supervisor this summer. I really appreciate how invested you were in helping me find projects that would suit my goals and interests, and I feel like I've learned so much in the few months I've been here. My roommates are sick of hearing me talk about Oberlin history, but it's become one of my favorite conversation topics! Everyone at OHC is so wonderful, and I'm thankful to all of you for the lovely experience I've had here.* Madison's comment appears on OHC's website "Buzz" page – a fun "cheering section" full of upbeat, enthusiastic and appreciative comments from members, friends and visitors. You'll feel good about being part of the Heritage Center when you visit www.oberlinheritagecenter.org/about/buzz.

OHC Staff, Board, Volunteer and Intern News

Welcome to **Kelly Wilson**, the newest Local History Corps /AmeriCorps member based at the Oberlin Heritage Center. Kelly has a very strong background in history education and presently is pursuing a Master's in Library Science with an Archival Administration specialization from Wayne State University in Detroit (while also working to finish her thesis as a doctoral candidate in history through Central Michigan University). Kelly will be working at the Heritage Center full-time for the next year and will serve as a resource for other history organizations throughout northeast Ohio.

Museum Education and Tour Coordinator, **Liz Schultz**, will take OHC's team of docent volunteers on the road Sunday, September 14 for their annual "field trip" to see how others do it. This year's destination is Malabar Farm State Park in Lucas, Ohio. This outing was selected because it includes a historic house tour (much like OHC), and an interpretive focus on conservation (much like Oberlin). Then it's back to work for Liz and volunteers as they participate later in the week at the two-day Pioneer Craftsman Experience on Tuesday and Wednesday, September 16 and 17 at Mill Hollow in the Vermilion River Reservation. Hosted by the Lorain County Metro Parks, the event provides engaging activities for 3rd through 5th graders that leave students with a memorable impression of how different the lives of early Ohio settlers were from their own lives today. Participants visit a number of hands-on-history stations throughout the day, including Liz & company's session on the Underground Railroad.

Celebrating, Appreciating and Toasting Prue

Collections Assistant, **Prue Richards**, was the toast of the town on Saturday, August 23, as nearly 100 of the Oberlin Heritage Center's Board, staff, volunteers and friends, gathered on the OHC grounds for a Potluck Picnic in honor of Prue's retirement following 15 years of service to the organization. Gifts made in Prue's honor will go toward conserving and stabilizing a wonderfully unique and amazingly worn early 19th century quilt in the collection that has always been a favorite of Prue's (and until this opportunity, it has been too brittle to display). Those who wish to donate can download a contribution form online (visit www.oberlinheritagecenter.org and click on the "What's New" sidebar link on the home page) or call (440) 774-1700 to have information sent to you. Or, if you'd like to add a note to a memory scrapbook being put together for Prue, contact members@oberlinheritage.org and request one of our special "Tribute" notes.

Board President **Nick Jones**, OHC volunteer poet extraordinaire (also an Oberlin College Professor of English) penned this delightful tribute to Prue which brought smiles all around:

A Toast for Prue on Her Retirement

Come, one and all,
Come, faithful hearts and true,
Come, and give a call
For any who might miss
Or lag, or be remiss,
Whether old or new--
To raise a glass to Prue!

Who would not run
And join the grateful crew,
In thanks for all that she has done,
And with our hopes for times to come,
And for all that will ensue --
And join the toast to Prue!

What can we say?
Our words will be too few
To properly convey
It all, we'd need an extra day!
But let us do what we can do,
To celebrate the work of Prue.

All right, let's start:
She knows our town,
So well: Its history of renown,
its fierce reforming crew,
She knows them all;
And knows the art,
Too, to make them new,
Bringing the past to life.
She tells us 19th-century rumors,
and makes us view
The past as if it we knew
what it had meant to fight its fights:
She brings to life
the age-old strife
Of slavery, and women's rights,
And even the wearing of tights
(or was it bloomers?).
All this, and more, is true,
And much of it we learned from Prue!

She sews our dresses,
And dresses up, herself,
In garb of old historic hue;
She transforms herself, she becomes Ju-
lia Monroe!

And not only does she sew,
She knows the proper glue
to keep collection boxes just so!
She manages an amazing stash
of stuff, both what is fash-
-ionable and what is not;
Keeps records of the lot;
Answers questions on the spot –
So here's my thought for you:
Could we please Accession Prue?

There's nothing she can't do;
Knows every bug that lives,
and mops the water from the basement floor!
There's so much more:
She handles every split infinitive;
And even in Monroe House parlor,
We never hear an anguished snarl or
groan from her!
Oh, friends: there are but few
That do so many things as Prue!

So now's the fateful hour,
The day when she retires;
and let us not be sour,
but do what's in our power,
And what the day requires,
Whatever may ensue.
We're glad she's still around,
Within a phone call's sound,
And most of all, we have a clue
That OHC
Could never be
As strong, as organized, as true
As it is now,
Without this pow-
-er house that's known as Prue.

So, friends, again I ask
That you now raise a glass;
Don't fret or stew,
Don't cry boohoo,
But let me know that you
Will really hoot
and cheer, and maybe coo,
to join this heartfelt toast for Prue!

Members Update

Thank you to our newest OHC members: **Michele Poling** (Los Alamos, NM), **Sally Pryor** (Wellington) and **Jean Slonneger** (Oberlin). Your warm support means a lot to this organization! Members are the foundation of the Heritage Center and new members always are needed to keep the organization strong and vibrant. Please join or renew as a member at www.oberlinheritagecenter.org/getinvolved/join. We'd love to welcome you to OHC today!

Also of Interest

Life and Art in Early America is a new exhibition at the Oberlin College Allen Memorial Art Museum. In addition to works of 19th century American art, it contains material from the College's archives that illustrate Oberlin's abolitionist history. OHC docents and volunteers enjoyed a special guided tour recently with **Dr. Andaleeb Banta**, AMAM Curator of European & American Art and curator of the new exhibit. For more about this free exhibit which runs through June 2015, visit www.oberlin.edu/amam/.

The **Quincy Gillmore Civil War Round Table** will hold its first meeting of the fall on **Monday, September 8 at 6:30 p.m.** in the iLOFT Building, Room 207 at **Lorain County Community College**. Featured speaker will be Cathy Nelson, founder and president emeritus of Ohio's Friends of Freedom Society, who will present "*A History of the Underground Railroad in Ohio.*" The program is free and open to the public. For more information, contact Jim Jablonski at jjjablon@aol.com.

The **Oberlin Community and Culture Festival** celebrates the tremendous diversity and creativity that make Oberlin the unique town that it is. Enjoy three hours of ongoing entertainment across **Tappan Square** in downtown Oberlin on **Saturday, September 27 from 1-4 p.m.** Be sure to stop by the OHC table to say hello and try your hand at old-fashioned games and amusements and learn more about "the culture of Oberlin's past."

One of the most creative freedom-seekers in antebellum America was Henry "Box" Brown, who, in 1848, engineered his escape from slavery by having himself sealed in a wooden crate and shipped to freedom. In a first-person portrayal, magician Rory Rennick presents *Henry "Box" Brown: An Incredible Story of an Escaped Slave Turned Magician!* on **Sunday, September 28, at 2:00 p.m.** at the **Kelton House Museum & Garden** (586 East Town Street, Columbus). Cost is \$5 per person, and the program is suitable for ages 10 and up. For more information, visit www.keltonhouse.com or call (614) 464-2022.

The **Lorain County Historical Society** presents "*From Garfords to Fords: Prosperity & Crisis in the Lorain County Auto Industry*" on **Tuesday, September 30 at 7:00 p.m.** at the Grafton-Midview Public Library (983 Main Street, Grafton). For more information contact Jennifer Lang, Adult Program coordinator, at jenniferlang@oplin.org or (440) 926-3317.

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